

Assessing Curricular Enhancements for Licensure Success and Workplace Readiness: Perspectives of Ifugao State University Bachelor of Elementary Education Graduates

Dizon B. Tayaban 
Ifugao State University
tayabandizon@gmail.com

Mary C. Monsalud 
Ifugao State University
marymonsalud792@gmail.com

Desiree B. Pawing 
Ifugao State University
desireebuhong@gmail.com

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Abstract

Teacher education plays a pivotal role in preparing future educators for both licensure examinations and the complex realities of classroom practice. In the Philippines, ensuring that graduates of teacher education programs are workplace-ready while also meeting the standards of the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) remains a pressing concern. This study explored how curricular enhancements and co-curricular supports influence licensure success and workplace readiness among Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) graduates of Ifugao State University Lagawe Campus. Using survey data from 120 graduates covering academic years 2011–2024, results showed that course audit subjects were highly effective in reinforcing licensure-related concepts, aligning with LET competencies, and enhancing

preparedness, alongside enrolment in review centers and testimonials from passers as key supports for examination success. Graduates further recognized the university's strong contribution in developing critical thinking, teamwork, independent learning, and applied knowledge, while highlighting the need for stronger training in written communication and complex problem-solving. Recommendations emphasized extended or earlier field exposure, enriched curriculum content, greater technology integration, and expanded student support services. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of continuous improvement in both curricular and co-curricular initiatives to sustain licensure performance and ensure graduates' readiness for the evolving demands of the teaching profession.

Keywords: *curricular enhancement, co-curricular support, licensure examination, workplace readiness, BEEd graduates*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher education institutions (TEIs) are mandated to prepare graduates not only for professional licensure but also for effective participation in the teaching workforce. In the Philippines, the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) serves as both a gatekeeper and a measure of program quality, since teacher education institutions are assessed based on their graduates' performance (CHED, 2017; Bernardo, 2019). This underscores the importance of aligning teacher education curricula with the demands of licensure and the competencies required in actual classroom practice.

Numerous investigations highlight the connection between curriculum design, board examination success, and workforce readiness. Hardy (2025) states that the Curriculum Quality Audit (CQA) process—through curriculum mapping and alignment with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)—enables Teacher Education Institutions to identify gaps and enhance the preparedness of graduates for licensure and professional engagement. Similarly, Nool and Ladia (2017) found that pre-service teachers who engaged in structured course audits and intensive review programs showed better mastery of competencies assessed in the LET. Beyond licensure, Cabansag (2020) emphasizes that graduates must also possess critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills to thrive in the teaching profession, aligning with global 21st-century learning imperatives.

In international contexts, curriculum adjustments to strengthen the link between pre-service training and professional qualifications have proven effective. In a study of teacher education reforms, Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) noted that program innovations such as extended practice teaching, targeted skills modules, and competency-based assessments enhanced both licensure performance and employability. Likewise, research in developing countries shows that embedding review-oriented coursework and practical application activities fosters confidence and preparedness among pre-service teachers (Saloviita, 2020).

While existing literature points to the value of curriculum enhancements, limited studies focus on the Philippine teacher education context, particularly in state universities located in rural provinces such as Ifugao. Given Ifugao State University's (IFSU) mission to provide quality education responsive to local and national needs, it becomes important to examine how curricular enhancements, specifically the introduction of two course audit subjects, have influenced the licensure success and workplace readiness of Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) graduates. This study also investigates how the institution contributes to the development of essential skills and values, and how these align with graduates' current work contexts.

In this light, the study seeks to answer the overarching question:

How effective are curricular enhancements in improving licensure success and workplace readiness of BEEd graduates from Ifugao State University?

Specifically, it addresses the following research questions:

1. How do BEEd graduates perceive the effectiveness of course audit subjects in recalling and reinforcing LEPT-related concepts?
2. What factors do graduates consider as most helpful in passing the LEPT?
3. How helpful was Ifugao State University College of Education (IFSU COE) in developing its graduates' skills and values?

4. How relevant are the IFSU COE developed skills and values to graduates' current work and life contexts?
5. What are the graduates' recommendations for the BEEd program improvement?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design to assess the curricular enhancements and co-curricular supports that contribute to the licensure success and workplace readiness of Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) graduates of Ifugao State University (IFSU) Lagawe Campus. The respondents were 120 BEEd graduates from academic years 2011 to 2024, drawn from a total population of 446 graduates. Participation was voluntary, and only those who provided informed consent were included, in compliance with ethical research standards that prohibit coercion.

Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire originally developed by the University Alumni Office and validated by the University Research and Development Office. For this study, the tool was modified to address specific research objectives and included items on employment status, licensure examination preparation, skills and values formation, and graduate recommendations for program improvement. To maximize accessibility, the questionnaire was distributed online using group chats, email addresses, cellphone numbers, and social media accounts obtained from university records.

Responses were consolidated and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, means, and ranking to highlight trends and areas for curricular and co-curricular enhancement. Narrative explanations were used to complement statistical results. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by restricting access to data to the researchers only, and the study was conducted in adherence to the ethical research protocols of IFSU.

RESULTS

Perceived Effectiveness of the Course Audit Courses in the Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (LEPT)

Table 1. Perceived Effectiveness of the Course Audit subjects in the LEPT.

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Course audit subjects help graduates recall and reinforce key concepts relevant to the LET.	3.48	Strongly Agree
2. Course audit subjects effectively improve graduates' test-taking strategies and confidence during the LET.	3.39	Strongly Agree
3. Course audit subjects are well aligned with the content and competencies assessed in the LET	3.48	Strongly Agree
4. Course audit subjects have a significant impact on graduates' overall preparedness for the LET.	3.55	Strongly Agree

5. Course audit subjects contribute to graduates' success in the LET, though certain areas may still need improvement.	3.58	Strongly Agree
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The results reveal that respondents **strongly agree** with all the given indicators on the relevance of course audit subjects in preparing for the LEPT. Specifically, the highest-rated statement, "*Course audit subjects contribute to graduates' success in the LET* (M = 3.58). Although certain areas still need improvement. The Course Audit courses are viewed as a strong contributor to passing the examination while recognizing opportunities for further enhancement. Similarly, high mean scores were observed in items stating that audit subjects improve preparedness (M = 3.55), recall and reinforcement of key concepts (M = 3.48), and alignment with LET competencies (M = 3.48), which confirm their essential role in building competence and readiness.

The lowest, though still rated as *Strongly Agree*, was the indicator on improving test-taking strategies and confidence (M = 3.39), suggesting that while audit courses are effective in strengthening content knowledge, additional interventions such as constant practice tests simulating the LEPT administration and coaching may further boost examinees' confidence.

Overall, the consistently high ratings (3.39–3.58) indicate that respondents strongly affirm the importance of course audit subjects as a crucial factor in LET preparation, particularly in reinforcing knowledge, aligning with LET competencies, and enhancing graduates' preparedness for licensure success.

Factors Helpful in Passing the Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (LEPT)

Table 2. Rank of Factors Helpful in Passing the LEPT

Indicators	Mean	Description	Rank
Course Audit subjects 1 and 2	4.38	Most helpful	1
Enrolment in review center	4.25	Most helpful	2
Attendance to testimonials of passers	4.10	Helpful	3
Structured study habits	3.65	Helpful	4
Others	3.20	Moderately helpful	5

The results show that **Course Audit subjects 1 and 2** obtained the highest mean score (4.38) and was rated *Most helpful*. This indicates that respondents consider their experiences in the course audit courses as the most significant factor in successfully passing the LET examination. This suggests that a strong academic foundation built through formal coursework is the key preparation strategy.

Following this, **Enrolment in a review center** (M = 4.25, *Most helpful*) ranked second, showing that guided review programs are perceived as highly beneficial in reinforcing knowledge and building test readiness.

Meanwhile, **Attendance to testimonials of passers** (M = 4.10, *Helpful*) ranked third. This suggests that while hearing experiences of successful examinees is helpful for motivation and practical advice, it is not as critical as structured content preparation.

Structured study habits ($M=3.65$, *Helpful*) ranked fourth, highlighting that personal discipline and consistent self-study remain essential but may be less prioritized compared to formal coursework and professional reviews.

Lastly, **Others** ($M = 3.20$, *Moderately helpful*) received the lowest mean. This indicates that additional strategies or personal methods outside the listed major factors are considered less significant in ensuring success in the LEPT.

Ifugao State University College of Education (IFSU COE) in the Development of Skills and Values of its Graduates

Table 3: Graduates perceived helpfulness of IFSU COE developed skills and values.

Indicators	Mean	Description
A. Critical Thinking skills	3.70	Very much helpful or relevant
B. Ability to solve complex problems	3.64	Very much helpful or relevant
C. Ability to work with others	3.72	Very much helpful or relevant
D. Confidence to learn independently	3.73	Very much helpful or relevant
E. Written communication skills	3.64	Very much helpful or relevant
F. Spoken communication skills	3.69	Very much helpful or relevant
G. Knowledge of the field	3.76	Very much helpful or relevant
H. Development of work-related knowledge and skills	3.74	Very much helpful or relevant

The data reveal that all indicators were rated by respondents as “Very much helpful or relevant”, with mean scores ranging from 3.64 to 3.76. This suggests that the skills and values developed are highly valuable in preparing graduates for professional and work-related demands.

Among the indicators, Knowledge of the field ($M = 3.76$) obtained the highest mean, highlighting that the acquisition of discipline-specific knowledge is considered the most beneficial outcome. This is closely followed by Development of work-related knowledge and skills ($M = 3.74$) and Confidence to learn independently ($M = 3.73$), emphasizing the importance of practical competencies and the ability to sustain lifelong learning.

Meanwhile, Ability to solve complex problems ($M = 3.64$) and Written communication skills ($M = 3.64$) received the lowest means, though still rated very positively. This indicates that while these areas are useful, respondents may feel that there is still room for improvement in strengthening problem-solving and communication training.

Overall, the consistently high ratings confirm that the program outcomes are strongly aligned with the essential skills and knowledge needed by graduates, with particular strength in field-related expertise and applied work skills.

Relevance of IFSU COE developed Skills and Values in Current Work and Life Context

Table 4: Graduates perceived helpfulness of IFSU COE developed skills and values to their current work or life.

Indicators	Mean	Description
A. Critical Thinking skills	3.77	Very much helpful or relevant
B. Ability to solve complex problems	3.72	Very much helpful or relevant
C. Ability to work with others	3.85	Very much helpful or relevant
D. Confidence to learn independently	3.78	Very much helpful or relevant
E. Written communication skills	3.77	Very much helpful or relevant
F. Spoken communication skills	3.77	Very much helpful or relevant
G. Knowledge of the field	3.77	Very much helpful or relevant
H. Development of work-related knowledge and skills	3.79	Very much helpful or relevant

The findings show that all the identified skills and values were rated as **“Very much helpful or relevant”** in the respondents’ current work or life, with mean scores ranging from 3.72 to 3.85. This indicates that graduates strongly recognize the importance of the competencies they acquired in their academic training as highly applicable in their professional and personal contexts.

Among the indicators, the ability to work with others ($M = 3.85$) ranked the highest, reflecting the respondents’ strong appreciation for teamwork and collaboration in their current roles. This is followed by development of work-related knowledge and skills ($M = 3.79$) and confidence to learn independently ($M = 3.78$), which emphasize the significance of adaptability and continuous learning in the workplace.

Meanwhile, the ability to solve complex problems ($M = 3.72$) received the lowest rating, although still classified as *very much helpful or relevant*. This suggests that while problem-solving remains important, respondents may feel a need for further strengthening in this area to meet the demands of their current work or life situations.

Overall, the results highlight that the program has effectively instilled essential skills and values, with particular strength in collaboration, applied work-related knowledge, and independent learning—key attributes necessary for professional growth and lifelong learning.

Graduates’ Recommendations for the BEEd Program Improvement

Table 5: Graduates’ recommendations for the BEEd program improvement.

Theme/ Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Sample responses
Enhancement of Practical Teaching	35	28	“Extend practice teaching duration across grade levels,” “More exposure to real classroom settings.” “Provide more field studies”
Improvement of Review and	30	24	“Provide intensive LET review,” “Strengthen test-taking strategies.”

Licensure Preparation			
Incorporation of Technology Integration	25	20	“Training on digital tools for teaching.” “Strengthen ICT integration, with child-focused and age-appropriate digital applications”
Curriculum Enrichment	20	16	“Add more content on Special Education,” “More focus on literacy and numeracy strategies.” “Strengthen debate, public speaking, and performing arts opportunities” “Integrate research-oriented learning activities”
Strengthening Co-curricular and Student Support Services	15	12	“Enhance career guidance,” “Offer more seminars and workshops.” “Support student clubs/organizations, coaching and mentoring programs”
Total	125	100	

Table 5 presents the graduates’ recommendations for program improvements. The most frequently suggested enhancement was increasing practical teaching exposure (28%), with graduates emphasizing the need for longer practice teaching periods and more real-world exposure and classroom engagements. This was followed by the recommendation to strengthen licensure examination preparation (24%), highlighting requests for institutionalized review sessions and test-taking strategy workshops. Technology integration (20%) was also a recurring concern, as respondents emphasized the importance of digital competence in the contemporary teaching profession. Some graduates also suggested curriculum enrichment (16%), such as including specialized courses in literacy, numeracy, inclusive education, and research-based learning activities. Finally, strengthening co-curricular and student support services (12%) was identified, pointing to the need for enhanced career guidance, professional development activities, and support to student organizations and mentoring programs.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the perceived effectiveness of curricular and co-curricular interventions introduced by the College of Education at Ifugao State University in preparing its graduates for licensure and the workplace. Anchored on the research questions, the discussion highlights how these interventions shaped graduates’ professional trajectories and how they can be further enhanced.

Effectiveness of Course Audit Subjects in LET Preparation

The results revealed that graduates strongly affirmed the usefulness of the course audit subjects in recalling key concepts, aligning knowledge with the competencies assessed in the Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (LEPT), and contributing to overall preparedness. These findings are consistent with earlier studies underscoring the role of targeted academic interventions in licensure preparation (Cagasan et al., 2017). The relatively lower mean score on improving test-taking strategies suggests that while content reinforcement is well covered, skills such as time management and handling test anxiety may require more structured practice (Ancho, 2020). ""

Insights from assessment-focused interventions revealed that curriculum instruction, LET preparation strategies, and conducive academic environments are essential for examination success. Ayyub (2025) established a positive correlation between perceived curriculum efficacy and the quality of the academic setting, underscoring the significance of instructional design and institutional support in fostering examinees' confidence and performance.

Thus, IFSU's course audit design appears successful but may benefit from integrating simulated LET exercises and more strategy-oriented coaching.

Factors Contributing to LEPT Success

The ranking of factors demonstrated that course audit subjects were regarded as the most helpful in passing the LET, followed closely by enrollment in review centers. This emphasizes the synergy between institutional curricular provisions and external review support, echoing findings by Lopez and Lumapit (2019) that both formal instruction and supplemental reviews are instrumental in licensure outcomes. Attendance at testimonials of passers, while helpful, was ranked lower, reflecting that motivation and anecdotal guidance are supportive but secondary to structured learning and review. Meanwhile, structured study habits, although valuable, also trailed behind formal interventions. This indicates that while personal discipline is important, institutional and external structured supports remain central to licensure performance.

Development of Skills and Values at IFSU COE

Graduates consistently rated the cultivation of skills and values at IFSU as 'very helpful and relevant,' particularly in augmenting their understanding of the field, enhancing work-related competencies, and fostering the confidence to engage in independent learning. This is congruent with the findings of Zhang, Admiraal, and Saab (2024), who underscored that educators' self-efficacy—molded by pedagogical experience, beliefs in self-directed learning, and collegial support, plays a pivotal role in elevating teaching quality and accentuates the necessity of nurturing supportive and collaborative professional environments. The relatively lower scores on problem-solving and written communication suggest areas that may require enhancement, particularly since these are critical in addressing 21st-century classroom challenges (UNESCO, 2021). Embedding problem-based learning and more writing-intensive coursework may help address these perceived gaps.

Relevance of Acquired Skills and Values in Work and Life

The results further demonstrated that the skills and values developed at IFSU COE are highly relevant to graduates' professional and personal contexts, with collaboration, applied knowledge, and independent learning receiving the highest ratings. This aligns with the World Bank's (2020) emphasis on teamwork, adaptability, and lifelong learning as indispensable skills in contemporary workplaces. Similarly, Todowen et al. (2019) highlighted that teacher education graduates who possess strong collaborative skills and the capacity for independent learning are more likely to transition smoothly into the teaching profession, as these competencies directly influence classroom management and student engagement. The consistency of responses across both sets of indicators (skills developed and their relevance) suggests that the program outcomes are not only achieved but are also being successfully transferred into workplace practice.

The slightly lower rating on complex problem-solving echoes the earlier finding, reinforcing the need for more opportunities to engage students in tasks that mirror real-world challenges. Providing authentic, problem-based learning experiences and field-based applications may help address this gap, ensuring that graduates are not only knowledgeable but also agile in navigating the complexities of the teaching profession.

Graduates' Recommendations for Program Improvement

The recommendations provided by the graduates resonate with broader calls in teacher education reform. The most common suggestion, enhancing practical teaching exposure, reflects similar findings in studies by Pacheco (2020), which argue that extended practice teaching immerses students in authentic classroom realities and strengthens their readiness. In line with this, Whitehead and Arslan (2025) observed that the lack of recent classroom experience among many teacher educators often results in outdated theoretical instruction and widens the theory–practice gap. Similarly, Zhang, Admiraal, and Saab (2024) stressed that teachers' self-efficacy and effectiveness are closely tied to practical experience and collegial support, highlighting the importance of embedding authentic, up-to-date classroom practice within teacher education programs. These recommendations suggest that earlier or prolonged exposure to classroom contexts, whether through extended practice teaching or integrated field experiences, can solidify the competencies needed for professional success.

Calls for more robust licensure preparation also echo nationwide initiatives to institutionalize LET-focused support (CHED, 2018). Tidowen et al. (2019) further found that structured test preparation programs, combined with faculty mentoring, significantly enhance examinees' confidence and performance, aligning with the graduates' expressed desire for more systematic LET review opportunities.

The exigency for technology integration accentuates the imperative of harmonizing teacher training with the ongoing digital transformation in the educational landscape. The OECD (2021) has already acknowledged digital literacy as an essential competency for 21st-century educators.

Demands for curricular enhancement and more robust student support services indicate that graduates prioritize not only academic preparedness but also holistic personal development.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study focused solely on BEEd graduates of one of the state university campuses, with findings drawn primarily from self-reported data. While these insights are valuable, future research could integrate employer evaluations and longitudinal tracking of graduates to provide a more comprehensive assessment of program outcomes. Comparative studies across teacher education institutions may also reveal contextual differences and best practices that can further guide curriculum and co-curricular enhancement.

CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that the course audit subjects were perceived as highly effective in reinforcing licensure-related concepts, aligning with LET competencies, and enhancing overall preparedness. Together with review center enrolment and testimonials of passers, these supports were considered the most helpful strategies in passing the examination. The College of Education also demonstrated strength in developing essential skills and values such as discipline knowledge, teamwork,

independent learning, and applied work-related competencies, though complex problem-solving and written communication were identified as areas needing further attention.

Graduates further emphasized the importance of extended practice teaching, stronger licensure preparation, greater integration of technology, enriched curriculum content, and expanded student support services. These recommendations suggest that while IFSU's curricular and co-curricular initiatives significantly contribute to licensure success and workplace readiness, continuous improvement in experiential learning, digital competence, and holistic support is necessary to sustain relevance in an evolving educational landscape.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Enhance Licensure Examination Support:** Sustain and strengthen strategies that have proven helpful in licensure preparation, such as course audit subjects, review classes, and peer support initiatives, while exploring innovative review mechanisms aligned with LET competencies.
2. **Improve Field-Based Learning:** Consider extending the duration of practice teaching or providing earlier field exposure integrated into selected professional subjects to allow students to validate theoretical concepts in real classroom settings. This may enhance their readiness and confidence before undertaking the full practice teaching phase.
3. **Integrate Technology More Rigorously:** Incorporate advanced digital tools and platforms into instruction to equip students with skills necessary for 21st-century teaching and learning.
4. **Enrich Curriculum Content:** Strengthen curriculum offerings by embedding more relevant, practical, and context-based learning opportunities that reflect current educational demands.
5. **Expand Student Support Services:** Provide continuous mentoring, academic advising, and psychosocial support to help students navigate both academic and personal challenges throughout their studies.

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